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FRIDAY • 4 JULY 1980 • No 1032 • 35p



"Interior of the Oude Kerk, Delft, with a sermon in progress", by Emanuel de Witte, 1682, is one of more than 130 Old Master pictures in Christie's auction next Friday, July 11. Immediately afterwards Rubens's "Samson and Delilah" will be offered for sale. The latter painting, which was in the possession of its probable original owner, Nicolaus Rockox of Antwerp, c 1613, was sold in Paris by the Prince of Liechtenstein just 100 years ago, and rediscovered there in 1939.

**The psychology  
of mourning,  
by D. W. Harding**

**Alexander Hamilton  
and the market economy**

**The anatomy of  
depression**

**The American way of sex;  
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## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

4 JULY 1980

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### Fifty years on...

The TLS of July 3, 1930, contained reviews of William Wyndham Lewis's *The Apes of God*. We must pay tribute to an English publisher's enterprise in introducing the work of a young American novelist who, as Mr Richard Hughes says in his preface, is "not only unknown in England but practically unknown in America also." He is a Southerner, from Mississippi, and young, prolific and unsuccessful. Mr William Faulkner, author of *Soldiers' Pay* (Chatto) and *Windus* (75 6d net)—a tragedy of soldiers returned from the War—has a fertile invention, a power of illustrating and differentiating character, a force in depicting both tragic and comic incident and a poetic sense of the poetry which can suffice even so crude and fleshy a scene as he presents here in Charleston, Georgia. This scene and what follows will be illustrated from the last lines of the novel,

where two stricken but resigned men—the doctor who has buried his son and Joe Gilliam who had not gained the love he waited so patiently—stand listening to the singing in a negro church. Comparing this passage with the brilliant opening scene of *In a Pullman*, car with the incursions into the story of the full satyr Januarius Jones, the sick body of the virgin who had killed him to seduce her, and the admirable scene of the dance that Mr Hughes rightly compares to the last act of *The Silver Tassie*, one sees why Mr Faulkner so heavily stresses the "sweet, with sex and death and damnation" that, to our mind, overburden his story.

Mr Wyndham Lewis has produced a volume of 625 large pages, with a coloured dust-cover and several black-and-white designs by himself, which weighs just over five pounds and costs three guineas. The edition is limited to 750 copies. A novel produced on this generous scale is something of a curiosity. Its mere bulk and cost are a provocation; and they provoke, above all, the question whether the work is justified by a proportionately general measure of inspiration and invention within the covers. We have to admit, with considerable disappointment, that this justification is not obvious. Mr Wyndham Lewis's intention, so far as we can gather, has been to express indignation in a long, coarsely worded and rambling satire of certain elements in modern society which he considers deleterious. Unfortunately the excess of his indignation is disproportionate to the importance of his objects and has blinded him to the fact that the imitation of trivial and tawdry is not in itself comic. Unless there is more meaning in it than meets the eye, this is one of the steps of modern literature, only to be attempted by the hardy or the insatiably curious.

### PSYCHOANALYSIS

JOHN BOWLBY:  
Attachment and Loss  
Volume 3: Loss, Sadness and Depression  
472pp. Hogarth Press. £12.  
0 7112 0350 1

John Bowlby's work represents the continuation, to some extent the re-emergence, of the British tradition in psychotherapy which—eclectic and empirical—seemed to be discredited for a decade or so after the Second World War in face of pressures from orthodox Freudian practitioners. It unquestionably derived from Freud's techniques and discoveries, and it always used some of his concepts, but it disavowed the more rigid theoretical postulates about the developmental stages of infancy and early childhood. So in the present book Dr Bowlby rejects the psychoanalytic view that a child's emotional problems after the death of a parent result from an arrest of development at the stage reached when the death occurred, or (with Melanie Klein) at some still earlier stage: he sees even analysts beginning to give more weight to environmental influences, and he notes that

the closer in time to the loss that patients adolescent or child have been studied and the larger the number of cases that a clinician has seen, the more likely is he not only to describe environmental factors but to implicate them when explaining outcome.

He goes to more pains and takes longer to disentangle himself of the trammels of Freudian dogma than non-Freudian readers may think necessary, but his thorough and explicit detachment of his life-long concern with affection between human beings from psychoanalytic orthodoxy is important and influential. Throughout the book he stresses the methodological difficulties of research in this area and the incompleteness of clinical observations, recognizing that they offer to refinement and not inviting ultimate theory.

Believing, in contrast to Freudians, that children are as capable as adults of mourning, though expressing it differently, he begins by identifying the nature and progress of mourning in children where his usual features as well as pathological distortions can be clearly seen; and he then shows, working downward from older to younger children, that essentially similar processes can occur in childhood as young as two, even perhaps during the second year. Dr Bowlby's method is to bring together observations—often without the accompanying interpretations—from analytic, psychotherapeutic and psychiatric case-reports and from a few systematic psychological investigations that have been attempted, and to organize them within his own interpretative scheme. Important material from the first two volumes (*Attachment and Separation*, *Anxiety and Anger*) is re-examined, methodological defects of each piece of research are examined carefully, cross-references to related topics are ample, and his own view is expounded with a painstaking thoroughness that sometimes suggests a teacher facing a class of slow learners. But this is a good fault, each step of the argument being brought out explicitly in plain English and left open to discussion.

Dr Bowlby implicitly accepts our modern Western assumptions about the healthy outcome of mourning, the basic one being that, however severe the bereavement, the mourner should eventually return to happiness and a level of outward-turning activity not noticeably different from what preceded his loss. Without endorsing the brisk good sense of Claudius's exhortation to Hamlet we feel that other people's mourning should have an end. But of course in the early stages of our own mourning the expectation—will there any hope or desire of "gating over"—our loss seems like a dialysis. And years later there may be moments when the emotional organization of our past life which a death dislocated, and which completed mourning has replaced by a different but stable ordering, relegates itself and with

it the renewed sense of loss, so that we now grieve for the lost grief, often with some degree of self-reproach. Emily Brontë created such a moment of recall, after fifteen years, in the poem "Cold in the earth":

Have I forgot, my Only Love, to love thee,  
But I must also feel it as a man...

Severed at last by Time's all-wearing wave?  
So too Wordsworth in "Surprised by joy" where he catches himself intending to share his pleasure with the child he has lost:

But how could I forget thee?  
Through what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind

To my most grievous loss?  
In relinquishing mourning without forgetting the dead may demand a much easier balance. When most people keep a memento of the dead, others resort to what Dr Bowlby (following Geoffrey Gorer) calls immunitization, with rooms and clothes left undisturbed as if the dead were still there or might yet return. As Victoria left that Prince Consort's rooms, the process Henry James imagined in a more extreme form in "Maud-Evelyn". Mourning rites, which in some cultures drive the ghost away or help it on its journey elsewhere, are methods of exorcising the ghost within, the empty outline of the dead that forms a great gap in what had been the continuous pattern of our interests and sentiments and daily habits, a huge piece now missing from the jigsaw picture of the self.

Dr Bowlby brings out clearly the fact, understandable but often overlooked, that the mourner's grief is accompanied by protest in the form of anger. The anger is variously directed—at the mourner himself, with self-reproach, perhaps for not having done all that he thinks might have been done; at the lost person for having abandoned the survivor; at other people, especially of course scapegoats, commonly doctors or neglectful relatives. Anger, half-refrained to accept the fact, repugnance to the loss, and compulsive reminiscence, these early responses to a great loss are sometimes difficult for sympathizers to hear with: a reminder, based on psychotherapeutic experience, that we should expect such things is one of the valuable contributions that this book offers. A short scene in *Macbeth* sums up much that clinical experience emphasizes. Faced with a bereaved and shocked Macduff, Malcolm at first encourages him to express his feelings:

Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak,  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.

But after three exclamatory expressions of grief and almost disbelief from Macduff, Malcolm turns to the usual "strengthening" counsel of friends—

Dispute it like a man  
to which Macduff replies—  
I shall do so;  
But I must also feel it as a man...

Reminiscence follows—  
I cannot but remember such things were,  
That were most precious to me.  
Then comes anger, first turned outward—  
Did Heaven look on,  
And would not take their part?  
—followed by an agony of anger turned against himself with bitter self-reproach. The brief scene remarkably condenses many of the characteristic responses to loss that Dr Bowlby identifies in modern everyday England.

Dr Bowlby and his co-workers make a further addition to—or revision of—everyday observation in arguing that the long second phase of mourning (after the first numbing has passed, with its yearning and grief and anger, is to be understood as stemming from an irresistible urge to search for the lost person, with forms of behaviour and misperception that imply an unadmitted belief that he or she might return; Victoria left that Prince Consort's rooms, the process Henry James imagined in a more extreme form in "Maud-Evelyn"). Mourning rites, which in some cultures drive the ghost away or help it on its journey elsewhere, are methods of exorcising the ghost within, the empty outline of the dead that forms a great gap in what had been the continuous pattern of our interests and sentiments and daily habits, a huge piece now missing from the jigsaw picture of the self.

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## The process of mourning

By D. W. Harding

not infrequently the adults surrounding a child are themselves unable to hear the pain of mourning, perhaps that of their own mourning, certainly that of their child's, and especially that of mourning together.

The cultural and personal context of this distressed recoil from distress is almost certainly what Suttie identified as the "taboo on tenderness": the fear of being in some way undermined by the gentler emotions and sucked back by a regressive undercurrent to the state before we were psychologically weaned, before we had been induced to stand on our own feet, keep a stiff upper lip, not be a cry-baby and not run to mummy. Fear of tenderness, sentiment discredited as sentimentality, toughness and aggression respected (sneakingly respected even in criminals), these are many features of our culture that must of journalism and entertainment reflect. The unmentioned ghost of Suttie haunts these pages on obstacles to healthy mourning; his interlocking concepts of anxiety about separation (emotional separation), chronic and unyielding depression and inertness, initial failure to grieve followed very commonly by a collapse into intense and disruptive mourning, overactivity and excessive self-reliance that denies the need for help, over-solicitude for others and compulsive caregiving which again implies an inability to accept the case one's own, for oneself, disabled in the death and persistent expectations of the lost one's return, or the dooming of some surviving relative to serve as an apologetic and inadequate replacement of him. As an instance of this last possibility Dr Bowlby refers to J. M. Burrie's miserable role in childhood of serving his inconsolable mother as a poor substitute for his dead brother, a dreadful situation with repercussions in Burrie's later life.

Special circumstances and predisposing factors of individual personality make each case unique, but mourning through them all is the problem of separation, of which loss through death is the final form. Biologically, in certain other animal species, we now know how traumatic separation can be. Socially and culturally, among us, it takes on added complexities of discomfort through social norms that create embarrassment in dealing with the distressed—whether our own or others—that separation and loss produce. Bereaved children suffer especially from the effects of these norms, and Dr Bowlby's illustrative cases fully justify his conclusion that

the evidence so far presented suggests that, irrespective of what the capacity of children may be,

Woman much missed, how you call to me,  
Saying that you are not as you were  
When you had changed from the one who was all to me,  
But as at first, when our day was fair.

Can it be you that I hear? ...  
He reproaches her for leaving him so suddenly:  
Never to bid goodbye,  
Or lip me the softest call,  
Or utter a wish for a word, while I

When you had changed from the one who was all to me,  
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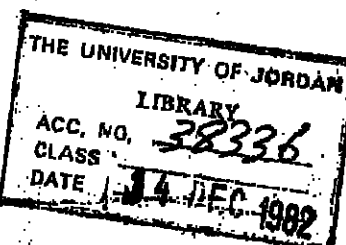
## A Sea-Shell for Vernon Watkins

A stage moon and he, too, unreal, unearthen.  
Then two shadows athletic down the cliffs  
of Penmarch near the nightshift of the sea.  
He spoke of Yeats and Dylan, his sonorous  
pin-ups, I thought, relentless romantic!  
Darkness stayed in a cave and I lifted  
a sea-shell from his shadow when he his talked  
how the dawn would be God.

The Bank calls and all are earthed.  
Only one shadow at Penmarch today  
and listening to another sea-shell I found,  
starlit, its phantom sea utterly silent  
—the shell's cochlea scoured out. Yet appropriate  
that small void, that interruption of sound,  
for what should be heard in a shell at Penmarch,  
but the stopped breath of a poet who, once sang loud?

Others gone also, like you dispensable,  
famed names once writ in olden spines of books  
now rarely opened, the young asking, 'Who?'  
The beaches of the world should be strewn with such  
dumb things as this immortal sea-shellable  
in self-long its own name, 'Sea, Sea, Sea, Sea.'  
I turn to leave Penmarch. This shell is useless.  
If I could cry I would but not for you.

Dannie Abse





Dr Bowlby's term "defensive exclusion" implies something so much more active than selection-for-relevance that it seems to have little advantage over the concept of repression.

Whatever theoretical concepts prove most scrutable there is no doubt about the value of the insights into disorders of thinking that Dr Bowlby's framework of thinking supports. He makes the important point that when mourning takes a difficult course through the reluctance of friends and relatives to give full opportunity for the expression of grief, it is not simply that emotion gets bottled up and moves underground; cognitive material such as ideas about the death and responsibility for it is also pushed away.

Especially in young children all sorts of faulty interpretations, misconceptions and guesses about the

reason for the death and the condition of the dead person can produce confusion and distress additional to the grief of loss. Dr Bowlby's selection of case reports from British and American psychoanalytic practice and research brings to light and exemplifies in variety and detail what most people of any perceptiveness and experience will readily recognize. We might in fact be inclined to ask whether psychotherapy can add much to the knowledge of good sense and psychological security that can be found in the answer must be that it certainly can, perhaps most clearly in guiding and supporting a surviving parent in her or his role in the life of the child. Dr Bowlby's deeply emotional but unsentimental account of his first wife and her early death (*The Initials in the Heart*, 1964) gives a vivid impression of the prob-

lem he felt in communicating with his small son, who had been given the news of his mother's death by her sister. In his desolation he received it like a grown-up with a strange understanding. But the dead brother so quickly locked up in each tongue-tied heart—owned in the devoted silence of a Trappist brotherhood. I could not hear that this should happen to Jill. Yet what we two could hear, I thought, the children, by living it, I thought could never say. What could I say of her but trivialities to a four-year-old boy whose own disaster was incommunicable? When we met after her death his one comment, before she was far more poignant than loquacity: "I did like Mummy". In this kind of context it is some American reports that seem especi-

ally understanding. Two long case histories, each of a bereaved four-year-old, illustrate convincingly how valuable a collaboration there may be between a good but profoundly sensitive and observant therapist in perceiving and alleviating the particular problem, each situation of course being unique, however may be formulated. This is the encouraging feature of the development of psychotherapy during Dr Bowlby's professional life. In spite of much that has been theoretically assertive and dogmatic, and some pretensions to even bogus, there has been immense progress in discovering more about our excluded preoccupations, confused convictions and assuaged emotional pressures that ordinary sense perceptions cannot illuminate. Much has also been

done, not least by Dr Bowlby, to make the broad findings credible, to modify some earlier attitudes, to provide specialized therapeutic help in many cases, and to enable any of us to make reading of his work a professional and a human experience. The particular value of his work, *Sadness and Depression*, lies in the right order: it emphasizes a basic feature of human personality, the capacity for attachment, which is unmistakably present as a background to the hundreds of instances in all their variety of form and degree, which clamour for attention in the foreground.

ACTION

## The story of Dr L.

By Abraham Brumberg

WALTER LAQUOR: The Missing Years. 231pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 0 287 77707-6

Dr Lason is a man in his mid-seventies, a distinguished physician and writer, now a resident of New York City. He has led an extraordinary life. A German Jew, he left his country for the United States only in 1946, having spent not only the 1930s but also the war years in Berlin. A Jew in wartime Berlin?

A clean-cut American graduate student and his girlfriend are incredulous. His own grandchildren, some born in the United States, some in Germany, are incredulous. His two sons feel strongly that their father owes it to his family and to posterity to write his autobiography.

The repression of anger in Dr Lason's classic paper, "Mourning and Melancholia," Arieti and Bemporad tend to play down the depth of the depressive personality. I consider that repressed anger toward the significant other is inevitable, since depression is so often a reaction to a humiliating and restrictive person. The authors' failure to emphasize the close connection between repression of aggression and the sense of helplessness in depression, to which Seligman and others have drawn attention, if all Sigmund Freud's aggressive drives tend to get in the way of the story, there is also the occasional lapse: surely a quarter consists of two violins, cello and double bass.

It is an engaging tale, skillfully constructed, its leisurely narrative interspersed with the author's comments and observations, which are always pertinent and frequently sage. Professor Laqueur is a professional historian (of contemporary politics and the Weimar Republic, of Soviet foreign policy and the Zionist movement)—to cite but a few subjects that have engaged his mind. The factual details sometimes tend to get in the way of the story. There is also the occasional lapse: surely a quarter consists of two violins, cello and double bass.

We the novel also has considerable strengths, notably its evocative quality and pervasive intelligence. The description of Mariabronn, the small town in south-west Germany where the hero was born, vividly captures a world of which hardly a trace has survived in its ruins. The novel's plot and previous ambience, its tiny Jewish community living in relative harmony with Catholic and Protestant neighbours, the generally happy familial relations and respectfully tolerant social mores of the pre-war era, are all so vividly evoked that the reader is almost tempted to believe that the story is a true one.

By the mid-1930s, the obscure "rabble rouser" named Adolf Hitler (as he had appeared to Dr Lason in the early 1920s) is firmly in control, and the Jews are in a perilous position. Some German Jews see the writing on the wall (including Mrs Lason, whose loathing of the Nazis is as anything even more fierce and uncompromising than her husband's).

Dr Lason's portrait is one of the most engaging things in the book, as is the episode of Dr Lason's courtship, played out and consummated in (appropriately enough) the magnificent setting of the Grand Hotel at Interlaken, Switzerland.

But the heart of the novel is to be found in the chapters dealing with the persecution of Dr Lason and his family. Frau L. and two sons—and indeed of German Jews as a whole—during the Nazi period. In the vast holocaust literature that has come into being over the past two or three decades, relatively little attention has been paid to the fate of German Jews, especially the "marginal" representatives: those with one quarter or one eighth of Jewish blood.

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## Sex-shopped in Soho

By Peter Lewis

DUFFY: 181 pp. Cope. £4.95. 0 224 01822-1

Post. Want an up-to-date, guided tour of the bum-and-crotchations of Soho without the bother of putting on your shabby white mac and trudging around the streets from one broken neon-light to the next? Want to know what "two girl love" is in a message parlour really involves, or what the nude dancers in the new-style peep-shows do at the windows, or what the going (if that's the right word) rates are for a "practically" various services?

Probably not—unless you can distinguish between the phenomenon of commercialized sex in its age of compulsive permissiveness, and the few not unaware of the existence of publications like *2000* and *All Round Up*, journals intended to expand somewhat on other than the "practically" side. Dan Kavanagh's *Duffy* can be recommended, not only for being very much cheaper than a trip to Soho but also for being vastly more entertaining.

But be warned: this book hardly ever goes as far as a double or triple, so let alone its humorous, satirical and in general of the best sort of pleasure of the town. It is a slimy slip-off. If you make the comparison, however, and find it is not inappropriate—feel

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## A bed of roses

By Peter Mackridge

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS: *Serpent and Lily*. Translated by Theodor Vasilis. 177pp. University of California Press. £5.50. 0 520 03885-1

There is a flourishing Kazantzakis industry in America, where, following the deserved success of his novels, not only have several doctoral dissertations been written on the author and his work, but a body of translators seems to be multiplying. Whether it be a tragedy, a travel article or a private letter, there will soon be available the whole of Kazantzakis's oeuvre, irrespective of the merit of each constituent part, while superior writers remain neglected. The present volume is a curiosity. It consists of the first two works—a novella and an essay—written by Kazantzakis published in 1914 and 1915.

The essay, "The Sickness of the Age," which is appended to the novella, here certainly helps the reader to appreciate what Kazantzakis was intending to do in his first work of fiction and also points to some of the ideas which were to become major themes of his career. It is a highly personal version of the history of Western civilization. According to him, the classical age was the childhood of man, in which simplicity and instinct were supreme and the world was a life of untrammelled joy, which was reflected in the uninhibited antics of the ancient gods.

This joy was destroyed by the pale Nomads, who through his suffering and his emphasis on the physical aspects of life, the gods were driven from the good things of life, directing them instead towards a non-existent Heaven. Finally, in the modern age, science has proved that this Heaven is indeed false, so that now we have absolutely nothing to believe in. Excessive self-knowledge and knowledge of the outside world have destroyed all mystery and with it all our convictions and all the basis of our morality. Using the story of Oedipus as a symbol of our own predicament, Kazantzakis claims that our insatiable desire to know has led

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to our being blinded by knowledge.

He mentions Nietzsche as one of the moderns of the *mal du siècle*. Although it is obvious that Kazantzakis's analysis of this sickness owes a great deal to Nietzsche's writings. In the same context he also mentions other names, some of which indicate writers who have influenced him: De Quincey, Pausanias, Baudelaire, Wilde and Huysmans.

The plot of *Serpent and Lily* is perhaps meant to be an example of what might happen to a hypersensitive soul not strong enough to find its own way amid the sickness of the age. (Kazantzakis himself presumably felt himself to be a Nietzschean *Übermensch* who was better equipped to cope with contemporary problems.) It is a lyrical, melodramatic tale heavily influenced by symbolism, aestheticism and decadence. There are clear parallels with the work of Proust, which like that of Kazantzakis also bears witness to the influence of contact between a young provincial's impressionable nature and the sophisticated life of the modern city.

*Serpent and Lily* is suffused with what the Greeks call *archaismos* (love of the ancient). The painter who narrates the story in his journal idealizes his beloved as Athena, and wants his love for the girl, which provides the nucleus of the story, to be as pure as the work of Aphrodite (Olympian). But this cannot be: the Lily (innocent, ideal love) is always intertwined with the Serpent (which seems to symbolize at times knowledge or lasciviousness). For others death is the end of love. Love is constantly jeopardized by both the mortality and the fleshly desire it necessarily contains within it.

From the very beginning the narrator is in a fever. He feels his beloved and is ashamed of the life he is leading. He is a sexual activist, but he is constantly to write of "the sweat of voluptuousness," "profane, caresses" and "mucky desire," and to desire to "defile" or "desecrate" his beloved. This is a contradiction. He can think of himself, or symbolize his body in his beloved (perhaps a central psychological motivation throughout Kazantzakis's writings) leads him to frustration at the lack of full communion between the two beings.

At the same time, the narrator's fear of sex leads him to an equally fearful consciousness of mortality, seeing always the skull behind his beloved's face, just as modern psychoanalytic analysis forces him to see the last moments of his beloved's life in the face of his beloved. He desires to see his beloved from mortality by being a Pygmalion to her Gaius, and finally attempts to achieve this, paradoxically by desiring the most perfect death he can think of: taking his cue, presumably, from Heliogabalus, he fills the bedroom with a forest of roses that he and his beloved (the latter not without a struggle) suffocate in their sweat. Thus he attempts to keep their love pure and eternal.

We should not assume that the novella is only a cautionary tale: there is certainly much of Kazantzakis in the narrator. The morbid wallowing in sexual detail, coupled with a repulsion towards sexual activity itself, the eccentricity, the aesthetic tendencies and the novella's obsessive symbolism may perhaps be a caricature of Kazantzakis's work, but it is difficult to see how it could be otherwise. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the book is its total lack of contact with the social situation in Greece in the first decade of this century. But in this respect Kazantzakis is one of many Greek writers about whose work one could say the same.

Finally, a word about the translation. Many passages in the original novella itself are untranslatable in their hyperbole and over-the-top manner. The translator's task has been a difficult one. The translator's task has been a difficult one. The translator's task has been a difficult one.

A limited edition of 200 copies of two early stories by Kazantzakis, *Serpent and Lily* and *The Sickness of the Age*, translated by Theodor Vasilis, is published by the University of California Press, 2200 University Avenue, Berkeley, California 94720. Price £5.50.

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## Anatomy of melancholy

By Anthony Storr

SILVANO ARIETI and JULES BEMPORAD: *Severe and Mild Depression: The Psychotherapeutic Approach*. 453pp. Tavistock. £10. 422 77340-9

Depression is so much a part of every adult human being's experience that one might assume that it was completely understood. This book demonstrates that nothing could be further from the truth. Although every one of us reacts to bereavement, loss, or failure with depression, the severity of our reaction can vary from a transient loss of joie de vivre to a prolonged state of profound melancholia, from which suicide is frequently an escape. Depression is the commonest of the symptoms which bring patients to a psychiatrist; yet psychiatrists differ fundamentally in their views as to its causes. A genetic factor appears likely to be operating in a "bipolar" manic-depressive psychosis, but this condition is much less common than recurrent depression with no alternative view toward mania; and the existence of genetic predisposition in the latter is dubious. In some cases of depression, psychological precipitants are not obvious or appear insufficient to account for the condition. Severe depression is often accompanied by physical symptoms, and may be related to a deficiency of the biochemistry of the brain. The uncritical have therefore concluded that severe depression is caused by a biochemical disorder, which is severely depressed is caused by a deficiency of the biochemistry of the brain. The uncritical have therefore concluded that severe depression is caused by a biochemical disorder, which is severely depressed is caused by a deficiency of the biochemistry of the brain.

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to arrest a man in the middle of the night without disclosing any reason to his family, deny him access to information outside, forbid his guards to communicate with him; and give him no hint as to what is to be done with him. Deprived of the affection of family and friends, the status and support which work affords, and of any future, the prisoner is, within a few weeks, reduced to a shambling, muttering creature who sits in his cell repelling twisting appearance or hygiene, and hardly responds to his captors. When loss is total, depression is inevitable. More over, it is the normal person who reacts in this way. The habitually isolated, who are not so firmly linked to family and friends by bonds of affection, are less affected.

We may be thankful that such overwhelming deprivation is outside the experience of most of us. Bereavement is, however, the most lot of man; and we all become depressed when we have lost someone who is both close and dear. Since this reaction is universal, and human needs, it is legitimate to ask the Darwinian question: What biological purpose does depression serve? Silvano Arieti and Jules Bemporad's discussion of this question is woefully incomplete, since they do not mention the experiments of the Harlow and Rorhns on maternal deprivation in monkeys, nor refer to any other part of the ethological literature. They do, however, discuss Parkes's important work on bereavement in humans.

Parkes described a period of restless searching for the lost person which is actually paralleled by a similar period of agitation and searching movements in maternally deprived monkeys. Arieti interprets this behaviour as an attempt to de-analyze the self to the trauma of loss, which is actually paralleled by a similar period of agitation and searching movements in maternally deprived monkeys. Arieti interprets this behaviour as an attempt to de-analyze the self to the trauma of loss, which is actually paralleled by a similar period of agitation and searching movements in maternally deprived monkeys.

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# The modernity of a meritocrat

By Max Beloff

FORREST McDONALD:

Alexander Hamilton  
A Biography  
464pp. New York: W. W. Norton.  
\$17.50.  
0 353 01218 2

England and America differ in nothing so much as in their view of history. England has a long history but it is studied as though it were dead and buried, with little relevance to the problems of the moment. The "whig" interpretation is all-pervasive. There may be dissidents, the occasional Roman Catholic or Marxist, but by and large there is an accepted version of what happened and no one is concerned to fight old battles over again. The contests between the friends of William Pitt and the friends of Charles James Fox are not re-enacted by professional historians. In America, with its shorter history, the situation is quite different. No issues seem to have been resolved except American independence itself. Each climax in the nation's fortunes from the making of the Constitution to the "Cold War" is subjected to perpetual argument and re-argument among historians: argument conducted with such evident passion that the plethora of books cannot simply be put down to the academic compulsion to early and frequent publication (the enemy of America, as increasingly of British, scholarship).

Of no period is this truer than that in which the nation was formed. The United States was uniquely fortunate in the calibre of the first generation of its statesmen, and historians derive the benefit of studying an age when a very literate national and even local leadership was impelled, by the lack of a national capital and the own dispersal for most of the year, to engage in discussion through personal letter-writing and the public prints. The materials are very revealing and exceptionally available; many are in print in excellent edited modern editions, for which we in Britain have no equivalent. But study in the American case has not produced consensus: rather the reverse.

In his new book on Alexander Hamilton, Forrest McDonald leaves his own explanation of this phenomenon to a brief epilogue. Yet the English reader accustomed to the detachment of our own historians of the late eighteenth century cannot but be struck from the beginning by the heightened tone of both narrative and argument. What is the reader to think of Hamilton and his policies clearly as to the future of the new nation? Is it not clear that we now think of Pitt clearly does not worry, say, John Ehrman, yet Pitt's problems of war finance and of conducting a struggle against an enemy entering deep ideological sympathy at home are not more remote from our concerns than the issues of Washington's America are from those of Jimmy Carter's?

If anything the reverse is true, for England was already undergoing the industrial revolution, while it is part of Professor McDonald's case that America was still overwhelmingly agrarian, not merely in its economy but in its whole outlook, with its ready acceptance of the social and political primacy of the landed interest. It is indeed, in his view, the enduring merit of Alexander Hamilton as a maker of the new nation the economic lethargy and social conservatism which this called for, and to have endeavoured through his new economic legislation to have propelled it deliberately towards a market economy with a political order based upon laissez-faire principles rather than protectionism.

It is perhaps beyond the scope of a biography to establish to what extent the Hamiltonian programme was responsible for this change which in the South did not take place till after the Civil War. Not all of Hamilton's programme was carried out. The completion of the Erie Canal and the establishment of the national debt are a permanent mark of capital together with the creation of a national bank, which indeed successfully accomplished.

The writings of Jacques Necker seem to have influenced Hamilton

as much as the English experience, yet by and large he got his "Walpolean" system and defeated the "Bolingbrokean" alternative—the old country party ideology—which was so influential in the Jeffersonian Republican Opposition. But towards the end of his life, Hamilton himself was talking as though the redemption of the national debt might be a desirable objective—a view completely at variance with his original theory of the creation of national capital as Professor McDonald describes it. The idea, set out in his Report on Manufactures, of a positively interventionist economic policy using the gamut of tariffs, bounties and subsidised public works to stimulate native industry, was not fully accepted in the time, nor indeed was it accepted as a national policy until the present century and then with somewhat different ideological underpinnings.

My feeling is that Professor McDonald exaggerates the status Hamilton had in fact acquired in the American national myth as developed in the nineteenth century. He writes:

Partly he got his deserts because most of American history was written by New England Yankees who, except for descendants of John Adams, almost uniformly idolized him. For many decades after the Civil War his niche in the pantheon of American demigods was beneath only Washington's. If indeed it was not at Washington's right hand.

This is not altogether true and I think there are good reasons for a more equivocal attitude, reasons arising from Hamilton's personal character and conduct as well as from the rather uncomfortable realism of his approach to the problems of government. What then are we to make of Professor McDonald's view of why Hamilton has recently been in eclipse? If indeed he has, the argument would have been more difficult to sustain. If Professor McDonald had included a bibliography, one must quote again:

But the American nation reached the peak of its greatness in the middle of the twentieth century: after that time it became increasingly Jeffersonian, governed by a coalition of the party spirit, its people progressively more dependent and less self-reliant, its decline candy-coated with rhetoric of liberty and equality and justice for all; and with that decline Hamilton's fame declined apace.

I find this most perplexing. It is true that for the past two decades the United States has been passing through a difficult period, that it is a more confused, less confident society than it once was. But it is very hard to see how this relates to Jeffersonianism, or indeed to a neglect of Hamilton's teachings. If by Jeffersonianism we mean an agrarian social philosophy, the notion is palpable nonsense; agrarian interests may play a disproportionate part in the making of some political decisions as they do in many other countries, but the United States is first and foremost an industrial nation. If one means the weakening of the centre in favour of the States, this is hardly the case, even if some efforts have been made to stem the drift of power towards the federal government. If Americans are more dependent on government than they were this would represent an anti-Jeffersonian development. It was Hamilton, who as Professor McDonald shows, was influenced by the ideas that governmental institutions are safest when personal financial incentives exist for their support. Why should this philosophy be less correct where workers, or even recipients of welfare, are concerned than it is in the case of capitalists?

"Party", it is true, is something that Jefferson welcomed and Hamilton deplored. But it has not been only in the past few decades that there has been a dominant factor in American politics; on the contrary, it is the decline of party that some would see as one of the main weaknesses today. I am uncertain what Professor McDonald means by "coercion". It is rather the lack of coercive powers on the part of government which sometimes gives cause for alarm. If what Professor McDonald means is the degree of freedom imposed upon some, or the degree of social regulation in order to

remedy the past wrongs inflicted upon black Americans, one can only remind him of the fact that, as he himself points out, it was Jefferson who was the slaveholder and Hamilton who was throughout opposed to slavery, the unhappy consequences of which he had observed in the West Indies of his birth and early years. Without the legacy of slavery there would be no need for "affirmative action".

It is not unfair to dwell upon this "epilogue" for it is obvious throughout the book that what has drawn the author to the subject is not a biographical interest in the ordinary sense so much as an interest in Hamilton's ideas and the tactics of their implementation. The most difficult thing to account for where the biographer is concerned is Hamilton's rise to influence in a society as stratified as that of colonial New York. And the author has made his task harder by accepting a birth date for his hero two years later than the one accepted by Brundage. I find the well-known biography by Mitchell, the preface to this suggests, even in an age when childhood was less prolonged, very hard to take.

Accident no doubt played its part, but Professor McDonald has a less facile answer: for him the secret of Hamilton lies in his inborn determination to achieve "fame", the mark, as he sees it, of the romantic temperament. The idea of a romantic temperament manifested in high ambition and proneness to unsuitable enthusiasms—clearly has a fascination for Professor McDonald; like most attempts to classify character it has its obvious weaknesses and I do not find that comparing Hamilton with Byron or Beethoven helps me to understand him any better.

On the question of political tactics, I also find Professor McDonald to be too prone to suggest deep reasons for what may simply represent uncertainty, infirmity of purpose or even boredom—as in the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention in 1787. But the narrative for the years of the struggle for the Hamiltonian programme is skilful enough, in spite of the complexity of the subject, to hold the reader's full attention. Professor McDonald rightly insists

that in the situation of the United States at the time the post of Secretary of the Treasury was almost concerned with foreign affairs, at least as much as that of the Secretary of State. And if he wishes to hold Hamilton to our admiration, it is curious that he does not return an epilogue to Hamilton's contribution to the making of American foreign policy. For Hamilton grasped the nature of the Anglo-French conflict against the background of which American policy had to be defined and could see the way in which material needs made it impossible to retain neutrality—avoiding Revolutionary gestures—and to let that the country was militarily strong enough to defend a neutrality which it professed. It is a pity that this carrying of a stick was the essence of Hamilton's doctrine, as it was to be that of a later American hero; the idea of foreign policy can consist only of declarations of principle with no essential weakness of the opposition's case against Hamilton, it is of their intellectual decadence today.

Professor McDonald's book is quite considerably to one's understanding of Hamilton, even if it makes Hamilton into more of an ideological and less of a hard hitting practical politician than his contemporaries believed him to be. The book has its weaknesses, but someone as conscious as myself of the argument from English experience, it is odd to find the publisher George III re-emerging as though nothing had changed.

The prime minister at this time did not always double as chancellor of the exchequer; the reference to a "Grenville ministry" early in the 1790s is obscure; the great lawyer Mansfield was both first baron and first earl, but to call him First Lord Mansfield suggests some prime ministerial or aristocratic position which he did not in fact fill. Where France is concerned Professor McDonald is one of the victims of the revolutionary propaganda against which Hamilton argued his fellow-countrymen; the French naval victory at Valmy was not ill equipped as an "armistice" with enthusiasm for liberty. Valmy was the greatest battle fought in war up till that time; there was no actual battle and the French withdrawal was not the result of a miracle but of the general's calculations about the balance of strength.

All historians make mistakes. I think that if I am less than totally enthusiastic about the book it is style rather than content that worries me. Most of the time, Professor McDonald writes a rather formal prose which fits in well with the style of the eighteenth century material he is obliged to quote. But occasionally, and jarringly, he introduces some modern colloquialism which would have meant nothing to Hamilton or his contemporaries. It suggests an attempt at modernity. And Professor McDonald has a weakness to long words—why "conservatism" meaning "conservatism", or "fermeability"?

Combs is a pilot, and he makes excellent use of numerous and properly quoted quotations from the Wrights' own works; he has also interviewed everyone who will allow who knew the brothers, and there are a goodly number of survivors, thank heaven.

Mr. Combs has taken the wise course of confronting the major technical problems that faced the Wrights, and has successfully reduced them to an acceptable standard of simplicity, often by quoting the felicitous prose of Wilbur himself, who has a masterly command of English. Combs also gives us about the right amount of personal details concerning the brothers and describes their life-style, both well and sympathetically. They finally achieved fame in 1908, and Combs manages to inject a contemporary atmosphere in his description of the incredible, though quite justifiable, enthusiasm that broke out in the modest but proud young men from Dayton; and I am glad to see, in the included one or two illustrations of

# History from Oxford

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Plans for the 1980s include an expansion of the list of scholarly works and textbooks in modern British and European history, and the publication of a completely new *Oxford History of England* under the general editorship of John Roberts. The bulk of the publishing programme will continue to comprise scholarly works, selected for their originality, importance, and intellectual quality, of which some recent examples are:

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Charles Cruickshank

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### Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution 1760-1801

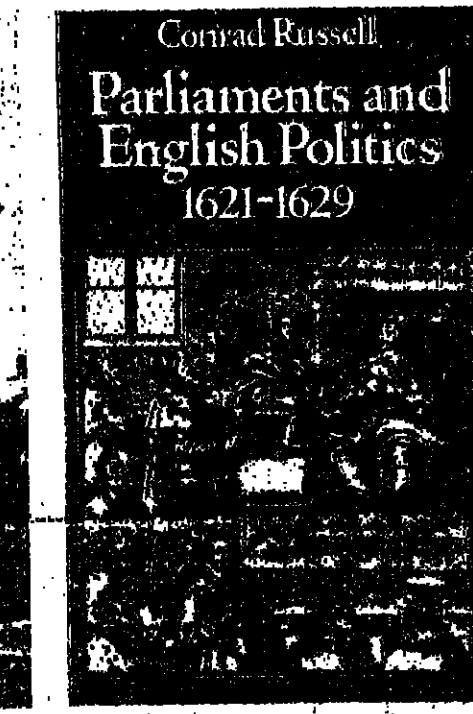
R. B. McDowell

"This immensely readable book . . . obligatory reading for any scholar of the period." *Irish Independent*. "It is unlikely that his treatment of the period will be superseded for a long time to come . . . it will be of great value to the serious student." *Irish Press*. £28

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## commentary

## In the family circle

By Christopher Edwards

Buried Child  
Hampstead Theatre

*Buried Child*, a play for which Sam Shepard won the Pulitzer prize, is an ambitious attempt to realize some of the themes of Greek tragedy in a small farming family in contemporary Illinois. Murder, a suggestion of incest, retribution, and a Orestes-like grandson who displaces the murderer rather than kills him, all sound improbable ingredients for a successful modern play, suggesting an unwieldy mass of melodrama and rhetoric. Here, however, they are brilliantly accommodated and, with one exception, barely ruffle the naturalistic surface of the work.

The lights go up on the figure of an old man slumped in the corner of a sofa and wrapped in a blanket. His furtive movements underneath the cushions to find a bottle of whisky prove that despite his appearance (crowned, it must be admitted, by a jaunty baseball cap, and though almost paralysed, he is still alive), the voice of his wife, Halie, calls inquiringly and then impatiently from an upstairs room and announces that she is almost ready to go out to meet the priest for lunch so as to discuss the erection of a monument to her favourite all-American soldier-boy son. The statue will have him holding a basketball in one hand and a rifle in the other.

The son had died mysteriously in a motel several years earlier, soon after marrying a Catholic girl. "I knew she wasn't right for my boy," Halie says, and her misgivings about the Catholic wedding and the presence there of several Italians on the girl's side ("even the priest was wearing a gun") create an uneasy sense that the son's death, through its associations with the ceremony and the Mafia,

was some sort of ritual murder. But Halie's husband, Dodge, doesn't want to hear about the past; he rises, with good reason, to fend it off. There are two other sons—a cripple who sadistically shaves Dodge's head when he is asleep, and another called Tilden, whose sudden arrival home after six years makes the old man start with apprehension. The atmosphere created by these four characters is claustrophobic and guilt-ridden and they live in a brittle conspiratorial tension with one another.

At this point Tilden's son, Vince, arrives with a girlfriend whom he wants to introduce to his family. Vince hasn't been back to his home for years either, but the family (including his own father) ignore him and expect not to recognize him.



A decisive scene from Whiteley's *Hidden Hand*, first produced in 1959 in Richmond, Virginia, by a company which included John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Lincoln. This woodcut, done in 1864, is among the illustrations for 'Tomorrow Night, East Lynne', an article based on the theatre poster collection in the Library of Congress. In the Winter 1980 issue of the Library's Quarterly Journal (Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC 20402).

Bewildered, Vince leaves the house and in his absence the girl discovers that Dodge drowned a baby which Halie conceived by a stranger. The identity of the stranger is left unclear but there is a suggestion that it may have been Tilden. Vince returns fighting drunk and, imitating a celluloid Cléo de Mérode, cuts his way into the house with a Bowie knife instead of using the front door.

Described in this way, the play sounds both schematic and portentous. In fact *Buried Child* is extremely funny and deploys a way at times reminiscent of Pinter. Indeed, after the arrival of Vince and the girl there is an echo of the territorial anxieties of *The Homecoming*—for instance when Halie,

having deliberately ignored the girl, turns to her and says "What are you doing with my cup and saucer?". But Shepard does without the reasons for the menace in *Buried Child* are made perfectly clear. What is more, his characters are apprehended less in relation to the room than in relation to the household where inherited guilt is being purged and a new untainted generation arising.

In his attempt to emphasize the classical cyclical pattern of the family history, Shepard gives Vince a set speech in which he describes how he tried to run from the house, looking into his driving mirror he saw not his own face but the faces of his ancestors, and after this felt compelled to return and assume control. It is a stilled piece of writing which, by allowing the character virtually to interpret himself for the audience, is the one instance where the play's content separates itself from its form.

More characteristic of Shepard's artistry is the way he suggests the regeneration of the household through its relation with nature, and he uses this to create a powerful final twist. When Tilden first enters, his arms are full of the corn he claims is growing in the back yard. Dodge is amused because he has not planted anything for years. Later Tilden brings in a huge pile of carrots and, while both occasions are effortlessly integrated into the play's comic surface, the association of this abundance with the arrival of Vince is fully clear. At the very end, just as Vince has covered Dodge's prostrate figure with a blanket and established himself in the old man's sofa, Tilden comes in again, covered in mud. This time he is bearing what can only be the exhumed body of the child murdered by Dodge. He carries it upstairs to his mother, who, more subdued than before, calls down to Vince, now installed as head of the family, and she addresses him in the words with which she opened the play.

In *Holberg Suite* the costume crisis was again of no consequence. The baller (choreographed by Arthur Mitchell, the company's founder) pays tribute to Balanchine's academic style, in which dancers wore black leotards and practice clothes. One of the most popular ballets in the repertoire, *Holberg Suite* shows to great advantage the company's mastery of classical technique. The women's costumes are open and easy. Virginia Johnson, in particular, has a marvellous breadth of movement seen in the soft, luxuriant sweep of her arms. Assurance in their schooling comes across in the vitality of the dancer's faces, especially in the way they use their eyes.

This glow of enjoyment was what was most striking about *Allegiance* No 5. The litigious, well-mannered choreography, the audience roared their approval at the end. The choreography, by Rowan Maldome, owes much to Ashton's *Monotones*, with its geometric lines, splits/punches and howling knots from which the men extricate the girl. Their Helanca body-suits also brought *Monotones* to mind, although the generous curves of the black dancers and their facial expressions departed from the economy and androgyny of Ashton's trio.

The programme ended with Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, where costumes and choreography were again academic. Paul Hindemith's discordant music, and the chief, almost penitential cry, the dissonance, was heard in the evening on a sombre note. But the strength of the dancers' technique—seen especially when every step brushed an ear during the grand battements in the finale—lent breezy fulgur to that conspired against the rich, soulless mood of the ballet itself.

The Royal Ballet has just begun a five-week season at Covent Garden. The programme includes *Clash of Swords* and *Julius*, both by Collier and Baryshnikov, a revival of *Song of the Earth* and *Onegin* by August A—a new Ashton ballet.

## Pas de décor

By Julie Kavanagh

Dance Theatre of Harlem  
Sadler's Wells Theatre

Before the curtain went up on the first of six performances by the Dance Theatre of Harlem, it was announced that although the dancers had arrived in the replacement of the Feld Ballet (scheduled as part of the American Season), the costumes and sets had not: these were still in America in the custody of British Airways. Thanks to Lily in the Royal Ballet wardrobe and unrepentant safety pin, the company was able to perform. The audience was also told not to expect the order of the ballets, agree in any way with the programme, or even the "revised order of programme". *Troy Game*, not scheduled till the following day, began the performance.

Any initial muddle was soon redeemed by the good nature and inventiveness of the dancers. When what looked like a piece of wood slithered on stage followed by a floating square of silver foil, they were gathered up by a dancer with a minichairman shrug. The lack of costumes could hardly have been a problem in this ballet, as there were never really meant to be any—only scraps of orange cloth round the men's loins and calves.

*Troy Game* was originally choreographed by Robert North for the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, but the Dance Theatre of Harlem have made it seem their own. It would be hard to find a white, cast whose physique could match that of these black men. Confidence in their bodies made the parade element in the ballet particularly funny and effective: a demigod pose was contravened with a self-deprecating shake of the head; a house-of-cards grouping, spotted by our non-conformist, multi-limbed and swaggingly made ironic and camp.

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## The dancing years

By Carol Rumens

Nijinsky  
ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue

Herbert Ross's new film deploys massive resources of talent and money to recreate the milieu of the Ballet Russes in 1912-13—the resources of a lavishness comparable to those used by Diaghilev himself in bringing Russian ballet to the world. Here the comparison fails. Ross, for all his ability, is no Diaghilev. The creation he has given us is a colourful, technically sophisticated, but old-fashioned package-dance populated by "Living Legends".

"Living Legends", as is well known, tend to talk and behave in clichés. Their accents tend to be romantic, excitable, broken English, unless they happen to be Romola de Felice or Isadora Brown, in which case their accents tend to be romantic, excitable, broken American. But they can still be grippingly watchable.

The picture opens, as it ends, with the camera slowly revealing that the gaunt, checked, doe-eyed figure that is George de Nijinsky is actually a young dancer, but it doesn't quite add up to the probably not very personable or charming, yet wholly charismatic, quality of Nijinsky's genius. From time have been taken to mount authentic stagings of the relevant ballets, but this effort is often thrown away in sketchy film-making. The excerpt from *Le Spectre de la Rose* is spoiled by being shot in slow motion, that last refuge of the director when he cannot find his own even more boring old art. Yet a few moments earlier, as the lovely Karsavina (Carla Fracci) sways her cue, authentic whiffs of gasp and tension are clearly discernible.

The "L'après-midi d'un faune" is more telling. He is seen making a superb, brooding, flash-popped Attic form of a faun. The on-

stage masturbation episode is genuinely dramatic and shocking, partly because so far the film has been so sexually fairly discreet. Unfortunately, Diaghilev's comment in the next frame quickly undermines the effect. "Tonight," he declares, "we have broken through to a new plastic art."

Despite his verbal banality, Diaghilev (Alan Bates) has great presence, with his two-tone hair and dandyish range of switches, and the movie that he and we have all been waiting for is accompanied by the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra—more sympathy than violence—moving the earth on the lovers' behalf with Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

Imaginative casting has ensured that many of the smaller parts are highly characterable. Alan Bates as Conzberg, the mournful Baron who

provides the player pianist with all the aids necessary to interpret a piece of music without having to undergo the drudgery of learning the notes, we can only question the nature of such an assertion. To claim that so much vital preparatory work is somehow separable from an inspired final product is a common fallacy: the complex path towards great and fully convincing artistry has to be a painful struggle for rolls rather than records is perhaps understandable when the results were occasionally more flattering than realistic.

There are, of course, some noble exceptions, but listening to the Player Piano Group's recent 150th anniversary tribute to the legendary teacher Theodore Leschetzky (1820-1915), once again provoked such doubts. Even Lionel Salter, an assured but determinedly facetious master of ceremonies, was reduced to playing for easy laughs. How can it be that Mr Salter, dressing the individuality of each pianist before extolling Leschetzky's view that pianists invariably sport easily recognizable national characteristics (French pianists are lightweights, German pianists are earnest, etc.)

Turning to the actual performances was to be rewarded of little beyond entertainment value and, at worst, of a travesty of genuine musical values. Leschetzky's own, freely embellished account of Chopin's D

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## commentary

## Roll over Chopin

By Bryce Morrison

Chopin and Leschetzky  
Purcell Room

One of music's most insistent but dubious legends is the so-called Golden Age of piano-playing, an age when giants roamed the earth armed with powers that are now virtually extinct. Located roughly at the turn of the century it was a time, one gathers, of stupendous techniques, personal magnetism and a sheer charisma that swept more academic considerations magnificently aside.

The legend persists (even finding its way as received opinion into the most venerable of musicological tomes, such as John Fowles's *The Magus*, largely because of the irresistible temptation to idealize a previous age. With the passing of time even the worst faults are apt to be seen through rose-tinted spectacles; carelessness becomes spontaneity, precocious mannerisms are seen as individuality, and flashy, undisciplined fingers come to represent real technique. It also becomes convenient to forget that many early recordings provide only the most provisional impression.

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provides the player pianist with all the aids necessary to interpret a piece of music without having to undergo the drudgery of learning the notes, we can only question the nature of such an assertion. To claim that so much vital preparatory work is somehow separable from an inspired final product is a common fallacy: the complex path towards great and fully convincing artistry has to be a painful struggle for rolls rather than records is perhaps understandable when the results were occasionally more flattering than realistic.

There are, of course, some noble exceptions, but listening to the Player Piano Group's recent 150th anniversary tribute to the legendary teacher Theodore Leschetzky (1820-1915), once again provoked such doubts. Even Lionel Salter, an assured but determinedly facetious master of ceremonies, was reduced to playing for easy laughs. How can it be that Mr Salter, dressing the individuality of each pianist before extolling Leschetzky's view that pianists invariably sport easily recognizable national characteristics (French pianists are lightweights, German pianists are earnest, etc.)

Turning to the actual performances was to be rewarded of little beyond entertainment value and, at worst, of a travesty of genuine musical values. Leschetzky's own, freely embellished account of Chopin's D

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## The theme of freedom

By Cornelia Cook

BARBARA FISHER:  
Joyce Cary: The Writer and his Theme  
414 pp. Corgi Smythe, £9.75  
0 461 0011 9.

"All great artists have a theme," Joyce Cary said. "... the development of the great writer—the theme—this is the part of him and his work which is the most important and the most difficult to achieve. Cary's statement forms the basis of Barbara Fisher's new study of the novelist. Those who have worked with the Cary Papers in the Bodleian Library have long been indebted to Dr Fisher for her work in sorting and classifying that wonderful mass of manuscripts, notebooks and letters. Dr Fisher knows this material intimately and she draws on it for her book.

Cary himself claimed that "my novels are all about one world which might be described as that of freedom." This underlying mood allowed Cary to roam freely, approaching the world from the angles of diverse characters' experience; it also encouraged his method of working on several books at a time, writing sections of his novels at random before letting them cohere into a plot. But each of Cary's novels is separate: each has its own integrity and its own validity. This is why the various recollections of Cary's "one world" are so undeniably fascinating and entertaining. Sadly Barbara Fisher, emphasis on the writer's "theme" overlooks this fact. Her book directs attention from the achievement which is the achievement of a great artist by considering the theme independently of the author's fascinating technical progress. Cary is a lively writer, a comic delineator of character and historical and social detail. And for all his freedom, he is a most English writer—indeed the pre-eminent novelist of English literature in his generation. These qualities fail to make an impact on the reader of Barbara Fisher's book.

Dr Fisher emphasises the religious aspect—in the broadest sense—of Cary's theme and its inseparability

from the aesthetic. Cary arrived through "the aesthetic experience" at certainty of God, perceived "as love, beauty and truth... whose nature we know by direct intuition." Such words only truly capture the nature of a man who was without a shred of religiosity, the poles of whose personal faith were grace and gratitude. To read Cary's statements about his faith, and to read his aesthetic treatise *Art and Reality* (the 1926 Clark Lectures) on which Barbara Fisher relies heavily, is to recognize the futility of paraphrase to convey the novelist's religious experience. As Cary said, "it is not enough to describe the intuition in the work of art. Relying on extraliterary sources to describe Cary's theme, Barbara Fisher misses the distinct flavour of those robust fictions in which the intuition assumes a life.

Cary's "theme" is never simple nor single. As a novelist, he is a bit like his character Chester Nimmo (whose significance Barbara Fisher seems to me to miss). In all Chester's feelings and energies seemed to run into each other: his religion stirred up his politics and his politics stirred up his religion, and both of them stirred up his affections and his imagination, and his imagination kept everything else in a perpetual turmoil.

This is one reason why, however seemingly simple in the telling—as, say, *Mr Johnstone or Himself*—Cary's novels are never simple in conception or effect. It is also a reason why Barbara Fisher's approach to the fiction remains at a distance from Cary's achievement. That he saw the individual as "a highly complex parcel of motives and reactions" explains, Dr Fisher states, "the complexity of Cary's plotting." For her analysis, therefore, it has seemed best to interpret his theme by reconstructing the plot. Plots were not very important to Cary. "A plot is the last thing I think about" is one of his more cavalier dismissals of the action's homely skeleton—but this dismissal goes important along with his selection of a "theme" or "thesis" as starting point, too: "I begin... not with an idea for a book, but with a character in a situation" (a claim his manuscripts validate). And he learned early on, by comparing his own "barrenness"

with Gogol's wealth of particularity, how to "enrich" a story: "For some reason," he observed, "the irrelevant part of the character is the most important to the plot, or the theme of the book, give that plot or theme solidity." The plot of *Mr Johnstone* is nothing without Johnstone's thoughts, his words, his inspiration and Rudbeck's intuition. The plots of the Nimmo trilogy are nothing without the motivations of the characters and the implication of their relationships to the theme of personal and political morality. Only in its interaction with character, tone, symbol, image, subject, and only then does the plot become eloquent of Cary's theme.

Barbara Fisher is aware of this; the deficiency of her approach is one of proportion in her critical emphasis. Certain elements of Cary's allusiveness (for possible allusions dominate her analyses and all to strike a just relationship with the more near-at-home elements. The influence of the great Russian novelists on him has a disconcerting way of ousting a great deal of the English literary and historical heritage embedded in Cary's works. Dr Fisher's relentless pursuit of namesakes, her often tedious application of mythological and psychological analogues, and her domineering discovery of an allusion to Cary's one-time flame, John Middleton Murry, on nearly every page of his fiction have a crossword-puzzle air.

Joyce Cary: The Writer and his Theme discovers much in Cary's reading and his experience that is valuable to our understanding of his work. But the book is weighed down by an overabundance of presentation and analysis. Constant forward and back reference gives a sense of disorientation to what is proposed as Cary's consistent view. On the other hand the author's tendency to follow the material in the text, in time confuses sometimes very misleading interpretation with otherwise impeccable fact. Dr Fisher's bibliography of Cary's published works is invaluable, that of works which influenced Cary is less so, though for that matter the book brings the fruits of Cary's full study to the student of Cary's novels. It remains, however, an approach. The reality of Cary's theme remains—triumphantly—in his art.

Daniel Corkery with his fine conception of the "exclusive nationalism" of Irish identity (including the Catholic, the Gaelic, the rural and the Republican) has written the Protestant, the urban and the Loyalist.

Alec Reid, after his initial goff, writes well on Beckett without falling into the trap of trying to connect More Pricks than Kicks to an Irish tradition. Hardly to sort out the case of Joyce's *Dubliners*. Most recognize Joyce's obvious distinction from and resistance to the Gaelic-Irish tradition, and David Norris (though he misquotes "his Celtic twilight" from *Pinnacles*) makes this plain. However, many of the essays feel the understanding desire to pay tribute to Joyce as the greatest of Irish writers and it is difficult to establish a tradition convincingly when its masterpieces do not seem to fit in.

The thirteenth task of incorporating *Dubliners* is left to David Torchenko who constructs a reading of some of the stories in terms of Irish myth and legend. Mythological layering is of course, by its nature, translatable. In Joyce criticism and has been performed with a new vigour by the editors of *Waste*. The Celtic Twilight makes this plain. However, many of the essays feel the understanding desire to pay tribute to Joyce as the greatest of Irish writers and it is difficult to establish a tradition convincingly when its masterpieces do not seem to fit in.

Any collection will, of course, be uneven and we should set against the weaknesses of some essays Seamus Deane's intelligent account of *Mary Levin*. Guy de Maupassant's place in the English canon, the Anglo-Irish, and the most of all between the Gaelic and the English.

## The ever-moving mind

By T. J. Reed

MARK BOULBY:  
Karl Philipp Moritz: At the Fringe of Genius  
308 pp. University of Toronto Press, £17.50  
0 8020 5414 5

This is a welcome book on an absorbing subject. Karl Philipp Moritz is a neglected figure to the extent that there has never been a full-scale study of him in English. Yet there is no question of laborious rehabilitation or grasping at insignificant details. His achievements are too substantial to need any special pleading. His *Anton Reiser* is unusually impressive as (that rare thing in any period of German literature) a social novel. It makes us see and feel more of eighteenth-century German life as it was, in all its undramatic misery, than any other book of the time. Its account of social conditions is indeed "unparalleled before the Naturalist writers of the late nineteenth century."

*Anton Reiser* is also a self-styled "psychological novel" which points to another major project of Moritz's—the journal of empirical psychology which he edited for the best part of a decade. This was not a scientific publication in the modern sense, but a grand collection of material from all kinds of sources, old and new, anecdotes and documents, aimed at establishing a broad picture of the human mind without any doctrinal predetermination. It thus stood in the Enlightenment tradition of critical empiricism, yet noticeably without any attempt to limit its materials narrowly to argue an "Enlightened" case.

Similarly modern, and more original, is the theory contained in Moritz's brief essay "Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen," that the imitation of nature in art can be a matter of piecemeal copying but of seizing an essential wholeness which is sealed down and embodied in a concrete particular—in other words, a symbol. This theory, among other things, exactly fits Goethe's poetic practice and anticipates his own aphorisms on symbol. It is impossible now to tell who gave most to whom in the months they spent in each other's company in Rome in the mid-1780s, but Goethe's famous regard for Moritz strongly suggests that he felt indebted to him. At all events, this theory is a new departure in thinking about art.

Moritz brings the same fresh mind to Greek myth, which he sees not as allegory but as a "language of the imagination" and to German prosody, where he treats the detailed movement of the poetic line not as a set pattern but as a flexible cycle from the concrete sense of the words and the reader's emotional response to them. Both mythology and poetic language thus appear as distinctive and autonomous, rather than as derivative from the language of fact and prose, a notable advance on routine Enlightenment thinking. Finally, in an excursion into literary criticism, Moritz offers an analysis of a passage from Goethe's *Werther*—the literary experience of his youth.

## Faithful to a fault

By Henry Gifford

GEORGI VLADIMOV:  
Faithful Russian  
The Story of a Guard Dog  
Translated by Michael Gleaney  
220 pp. Corgi, £4.95  
0 224 01689 X

Georgi Vladimov's finely written novel—translated most readably by Michael Gleaney—provides a well-judged introduction—belonging to the genre in which animal rights to make our human morality and finally become its victim. The work is more profound than one might have expected from the subject. Russian is no mere cynical dog like his master. He has been

and thereafter his touchstone of value—which is close reading of a kind scarcely known in his time and may still stand as an admirable account of the thought, feeling and rhetoric of this particular text.

All these make a cumulative case for Moritz's importance as one of the most interesting of minor eighteenth-century writers, if not (as Mark Boulby's subtitle suggests) something more. The main argument against rating him more highly has usually been that Moritz was a dilettante, an amateur, an intuitive who flitted from one theme to another. Certainly he did not develop far the lines he had opened up. He was, however, usually brief, and he does not return to a subject, however fruitful the ideas he has raised. He thus never made a career for himself in any one intellectual profession, more than in the literary one. He was variously a schoolmaster and textbook-author, traveller and travel-writer, editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*, and finally professor in the Berlin Royal Academy of Arts, where (not surprisingly) an imaginative autodidact was more noted for his "brilliant errors" as a lecturer.

Still, "dilettante" will not quite do. For one thing, the work has much the ring of easy circumstances and an uncompelled eagerness for an uncalculated in idleness, which hardly applies to Moritz, either in the youthful hard times recorded in *Anton Reiser* or in the later years when he was forced to live by the shifts and opportunism of so many toiling men of letters in eighteenth-century Germany.

More substantially, there is the obvious that his scattered pursuits show a measure of coherence even though he did not link them into any system. It lies partly in the way he himself consistently sought coherent patterns—wholeness, autonomy—whether in the materials of his own autobiographical fiction or in the products of other men's minds and art; partly also in his inclination towards the real and concrete which marks all his thinking; partly, again, in the openness to a genuine, though far from total, experience and art which makes him, while not yet a Romantic, something more than an Enlightenment man.

At its best, Mr Boulby's study gives us glimpses of this unity, of the submarine connections between what Moritz's earliest biographer could only show as an "archipelago of floating, isolated islands". At its best, too, it illuminates the subject with a well-turned phrase and a ready sympathy for Moritz's free-range products to the point of suggesting that his idling, his dilettantism and his fundamentally unscholarly attitudes and appetites helped to preserve him from the pedantry into which so many industrious German classicists and aestheticians fell in a sense that have made possible his innovative thinking. This comes near to saying that Moritz was the non-specialist whose demise, as a necessary consequence of the division of labour in modern culture, was lamented by thinkers like Schiller and it suggests that Moritz could be this, not by restoring in his own equilibrium but merely by being human, all too human. It is a task and most appealing response to the disquiet of Moritz as a dilettante.

## Beginning with revelation

By John Macquarrie

S. W. SYKES (Editor):  
Karl Barth: Studies of his Theological Methods  
244 pp. Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, £10.  
0 19 826649 9

Even twelve years after his death, the name of Karl Barth can still arouse considerable passion among those interested in Christian theology. Some carry their admiration of Barth almost to the point of fanaticism, and regard him as the greatest theologian since the Reformation. Others believe that he has done a great deal of harm by erecting a formidable barrier between theology and secular thought. Perhaps the time is approaching when more sober judgments will be possible, and this book may be among the first of them.

However, the basic purpose of the book is not to promote the study of Barth but to encourage serious engagement with his thought. The task is to acquire a sufficient understanding of Barth's method of theological argument, so as to be able to use Barth's *Dogmatics* intelligently as a source of theological stimulation. Presumably, another theologian might have served some purpose, though the very richness and comprehensiveness of Barth's work makes him an obvious choice.

S. W. Sykes, editor of the book, has been trying for a number of years to wean English theologians away from their traditional preoccupation with biblical and historical studies to the tasks of systematic theology. This would also imply breaking out of the insularity of so much English theology. Barth's *Dogmatics* may prove to be some what strong meat when used as an introduction to the tasks of theology. Few are likely to think it worth while to read through the six million words of that inflated opus. But on reading Barth, one is reminded of Jesus Christ's words: "I am the goal of everything and the centre to which everything moves. He who

theologians of a more philosophical bent, and perhaps no one today could claim to be theologically literate if he had not laboured over, at least one or two of Barth's volumes.

Professor Sykes and his collaborators have certainly immersed themselves in the Barthian texts. They believe that many of those who have written about Barth in English have been not hindered them from expressing some quite devastating criticisms.

One of the most debated problems in theology is the question of where to begin. What are the initial data? How does one get the theological enterprise moving? Barth has a very clear answer to this. We begin with revelation. Given this starting point, theology can be developed with both rigour and objectivity, for it will consist in the explication and elucidation of the given revelation. Barth has no hesitation in claiming for it the rank of a "science", though he points out that there is no uniform concept of science, but that every science has to work out the methods appropriate to its subject-matter.

Most theologians—and certainly most English theologians—disagree. They want to begin theology further back. Especially in an age like ours when faith is difficult for many, it would seem necessary to establish a divine reality which is the foundation of theology. In other words, revealed theology needs to be prefaced by some form of natural theology.

But this is what Barth consistently refused to accept. Perhaps, from the point of view of faith, he was right. If one has been encouraged by a divine reality which is endlessly rich and fulfilling for life, then how could one think of going behind it or validating it? On reading Barth, one is reminded of Jesus Christ's words: "I am the goal of everything and the centre to which everything moves. He who

knows him knows the reason for everything."

As a young man, Barth had argued against the great Harnack that theology is closer to preaching than it is to science, and, although the mature Barth makes his claim for the scientific status of theology, it is doubtful whether he had really moved from his earlier position. Rather, he has redefined "science" in such a way that theology is not only the queen of the sciences but the norm and criterion for every science, in spite of what he says about the right of every science to work out its own appropriate methods. The overwhelming weight assigned to divine revelation calls in question not just natural theology but any natural knowledge whatsoever. One of the contributors to this volume (Richard Roberts) seems close to the truth when he claims that for Barth "the reality of the divine denies, subverts and supercedes the reality of the mundane". But the implicit denial of mundane reality is a serious departure from the mainstream of traditional Christian teaching, in which the doctrine of creation has conferred a certain dignity on the material world. Barth (and in this he was not alone among twentieth-century theologians) not only despised natural theology but also, more seriously, lacked a theology of nature. His doctrine of creation is the most poorly developed part of his *Dogmatics*, especially when compared with his work on Christology.

Barth will not do, and for many other reasons than those that have been sketched here. Still less, however, will the pre-Barthian liberal theology do, a more or less rationalistism weekly thinned with Christian imagery, though it keeps threatening to come back. As has often been said, the history of the century must move through Barth rather than round him. It must seek to combine the seriousness of his engagement with Christian faith with a broader base in the common human experience. Presumably, it must do this by recovering the best of the liberal tradition, as Professor Sykes and his collaborators have in view when they urge dialogue with Barth's way of getting beyond the "somewhat anemic" theology that prevails in England at the present time.

These technicalities but he subordinated them to his greater purposes of theological understanding, often turning such matters as the appropriateness of the Bible to account, when thinkers like Abelard treated them as problems in themselves. Abelard's *Sic et Non* as a systematic attempt to display and resolve contradictory statements was the reverse of Anselm's desire to overcome them as quickly as possible in his monographic treatment and more important resolutions. His own technical treatment of grammar, to say nothing of his logic, was of a high order. But he employed it to simplify what his contemporaries were multiplying, a contrast expressed in his monographic treatment and the new forms of questions, sentences and commentaries as the predominant modes of the schools. Anselm, as Dr Evans says, was a God-centred theologian to which reason ought to ascend; for many of the new generation, the great theological issues, as well as the non-theological ones, were being framed in terms of human understanding and experience.

The difference is effectively illustrated by Evans in the attitudes of Anselm and Abelard towards the truth of revelation. To Anselm it centred upon the mystery of Christ's assumption of a human nature, not his experiences as a man; to Abelard Christ came to set an example as a man. Undoubtedly the polarity represents a changing attitude towards the divine and human experience. But it equally represents different costs of thinking and personalities. What is perhaps unique to the time was that there was scope for each without restriction upon the other as there undoubtedly would not have been fifty years earlier in the middle of the eleventh century and probably would have been fifty years later in the middle of the twentieth century. The merit of Dr Evans's book is to have allowed time and personality to illuminate one another.

## The ascent of reason

By Gordon Leff

G. R. EVANS:  
Anselm and a New Generation  
212 pp. Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, £12.  
0 19 826651 0

Part of Anselm's fascination for a historically conscious age is how intellectually he stood outside his own age. When all allowance has been made for the differences between his monastic ambience and that of the emerging schools of many of his contemporaries and successors there still remains an irreducible individuality of outlook that cannot be explained away by appeal to different circumstances. What differentiated him from one as much as from the other was his completeness as a philosopher. If, as a monk, he began from meditation upon faith, he had a seemingly invincible confidence in the power of reason to illuminate faith which was not only uncharacteristic of the eleventh but of the growing dialectical attitude in the schools of seeking truth through doubt. 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